



# ELEMORE HALL SCHOOL

<b>Policy Title</b>	<b>Safeguarding &amp; Child Protection Policy 2025</b>
---------------------	--

<b>This version</b>	<b>September 2025</b>
<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Governing Body</b>
<b>To be reviewed by</b>	<b>Governing Body</b>
<b>Review Due</b>	<b>September 2026</b>

# Safeguarding and Child Protection Training Summary

Our school complies with the advice laid down in ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ 2018 and ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ September 2025 to undertake regular training.

A record of those trained may be found in the Single Central Record and certificates are kept to where appropriate, to verify the attendance of individuals. Child protection and safeguarding training form a key part of our induction processes. All staff will receive regular updates regarding child protection and safeguarding, including online safety, as necessary and at least annually.

Training for the designated safeguarding lead and other designated teachers in school is undertaken every 2 years.

We recognise that, as a minimum, schools should ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead undertakes Prevent awareness training and is thus able to provide advice and support to other members of staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation (The Prevent duty DFE June 2015).

Designated Safeguarding Leads		
Name	Training	Date
Hillary Johnson-Browne	Prevent Duty for SLT/DSLs/Governors	Jun 2024
	County Lines - Refresher	
	Child-on-Child Sexual Violence, Abuse and Harassment	
	E-Safety (including online safety)	
	Designated Safeguarding Lead - Refresher	Mar 2024
	Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)	
	Advanced DSL Training	Oct 2023
	Appropriate Adult	
	General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) - Refresher	
	Appropriate Adult	
Phill Brette	Designated Safeguarding Lead - Refresher	Nov 2025
	DSL Training	Mar 2023
	Advanced DSL Training	Oct 2023
	Safer Recruitment	Apr 2023

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)		
Name	Training	Date
Michael Hunter	KCSIE 2024 & Legislation Update Course for Senior Leaders, Governance & Management	Sep 2024
	Safeguarding & Child Protection for Staff in Regulated Activity - Refresher	Jan 2024
	Health & Safety	
	Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing of Children and Young People	Oct 2023
	E-Safety (including online safety)	
	Safer Recruitment	
	Designated Safeguarding Lead	
Andrea Davies	Designated Safeguarding Lead	Apr 2026
	E-Safety (including online safety)	Mar 2026
	KCSIE 2025 Update Course for Senior Leaders, DSLs & Governors	
	Safer Recruitment	
	Appropriate Adult	May 2024
	County Lines	Apr 2023
Dale Coxon	DSL Training	Feb 2025
	Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)	Oct 2023
	Prevent Training	Apr 2023
	County Lines	
Dave Lord	E-Safety (including online safety)	Jan 2026
	Risk Assessment	
	Designated Safeguarding Lead	Oct 2025
	Safeguarding & Child Protection for Staff in Regulated Activity	Sep 2025
	KCSIE 2025 Update Course for Senior Leaders, DSLs & Governors	
Kate Johnston	KCSIE 2025 Update Course for Senior Leaders, DSLs & Governors	Sep 2025
	Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) Preparation for DSLs	Sep 2025
Sheridan Lambton	KCSIE 2025 (Senior Leaders and DSLs)	Sep 2025
	Designated Safeguarding Lead	Jun 2024
	Honour Based Abuse (HBA)	May 2024
	Prevent Duty	Dec 2023
	County Lines	Nov 2023

Nominated Governor for Child Protection and Safeguarding		
Name	Training	Date
Sally Glover	KCSIE 2025 Update Course for Senior Leaders, DSLs & Governors	Mar 2026
Angela Darnell	Safer Recruitment	Nov 2020

Governor(s) and Staff with Safer Recruitment Training		
Name	Training	Date
Angela Darnell	Safer Recruitment	Nov 2020

Whole Staff		
Name	Training	Date
See separate signed list	Areas covered include safeguarding, CCE prevent, County Lines, Nudes (semi), KCSIE 2025 Update	Sep 2025

**Local Authority Designated Officer(s) (LADO):**  
 Sharon Lewis / Louise Brooks 03000 268835  
[CYPSSLADOsecure@durham.gov.uk](mailto:CYPSSLADOsecure@durham.gov.uk)  
 First Contact Service: 03000 26 79 79

# CONTENTS

## **A. Principles of the Policy**

## **B. Main Elements of the Policy**

1. Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop
2. Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children
3. Training and supporting staff to equip them to appropriately recognise, respond to and support children who are vulnerable and may be in need of safeguarding
4. Raising awareness of other safeguarding issues, boosting resilience and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe
5. Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse

## **C. Overview: Safeguarding**

1. Definition of ‘Safeguarding’
2. Safeguarding within this school
3. Safeguarding throughout school life
  - Caring ethos
  - Curriculum
  - Universal services and specialist support staff
  - The extended day / Residential
  - Working with parents and carers

## **D. Child Protection within overall safeguarding and Early Help arrangements for all children/young people in school**

1. Life at home
2. Signs and behaviours of concern
3. Early Help Single Assessment Procedure and Practice Guidance
4. Child in Need: more complex cases Level 3 (Amber)
5. Child Protection and significant harm
6. Prepare for the unexpected
7. Low level concerns

## **E. Multi-Agency Work in Child Protection**

1. Initial Child Protection Conference: school responsibilities
  - Attendance
  - Preparation of a report
  - Chronology of significant events
  - Sharing of the report
2. Membership of a Core Group
3. Review Child Protection Conference

# CONTENTS

## **F. Information-Sharing**

1. [Parents/carers](#)
2. [School staff](#)
3. [Children moving to another school and the transfer of records](#)
4. [County guidance and protocols](#)

## **G. Allegations against staff and volunteers**

## **H. Safe Touch**

## **I. Physical control and restrictive physical intervention: use of reasonable force**

## **J. The Prevent Duty**

## **K. Child Sexual Exploitation**

## **L. Female Genital Mutilation**

## **M. Online Safety**

## **N. Child on Child Abuse (including Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment)**

## **O. Child Criminal Exploitation including County Lines**

## **P. Serious Violence**

## **Q. Mental Health**

## **R. Domestic Abuse**

## **Appendices**

1. [Summary of multi-agency meetings](#)
2. [Durham Prevent flowchart](#)

# Section A. PRINCIPLES OF THE POLICY

Children maximise their potential in an environment which is safe, secure and supportive of all their needs, including any needs they have for protection from abuse.

Our school is committed to promoting the welfare of all children by working in partnership with parents and carers, the Local Authority (LA) and multi-agency partners in early help and child protection, in accordance with locally agreed multi-agency safeguarding arrangements procedures and practices.

Our policy applies to members of the school community in its widest sense. This includes children and young people, their parents/carers, school staff, governors, visitors, specialist staff, and the local and wider community where they interface with the school. Within its framework, the policy outlines entitlements and responsibilities in securing the protection of children who attend the school.

Our policy is underpinned and shaped by legislation and guidance contained in a variety of documents including: -

- ❖ [The Children Act 1989; Children Act 2004](#)
- ❖ [The Education Act 2002; Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- ❖ [Working Together to Safeguard Children July](#)
- ❖ [Local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and procedures](#)
- ❖ [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – HM Government 2015](#)
- ❖ [Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2025. Statutory guidance for schools and colleges.](#)
- ❖ [Use of reasonable force. Advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies.](#)
- ❖ **County Durham Practice Framework: Single Assessment Procedures and Practice Guidance August 2016**
- ❖ [Confidential Reporting Code](#)
- ❖ [Information Sharing Agreement: County Durham Safeguarding Adults Inter-agency Partnership](#)
- ❖ [Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales](#)
- ❖ **The Prevent Duty Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers, Department for Education June 2015**
- ❖ **Procedures for locating missing pupils and the removal of pupils from roll June 2017. ([Children Missing Education Guidance](#))**

To emphasise the caring ethos of our school, the staff and governors are committed to the following principles: -

- The welfare and well-being of each child is of paramount importance.
- Our policy works on the premise that abuse takes place in all communities and that school staff are particularly well-placed to identify and refer concerns and also to act to prevent children and young people from being abused.
- We respect and value each child as an individual.
- We are a listening school, and encourage an environment where children feel free to talk, knowing that they will be listened to.
- The protection of children from abuse is a whole-school issue, and the responsibility therefore of the entire school community.
- Our policy should be accessible in terms of understanding and availability. Regular training will ensure all adults in school are aware of indicators of concern or abuse and colleagues that act as designated safeguarding leads that such information should be promptly passed on to.
- Our policy will be developed and kept up to date with information from our relevant partners in early help and child protection as well as national documentation issued by HM Government and The Department for Education.
- We will use the school curriculum to resource our children to protect themselves from abuse, both as victims and as potential perpetrators.
- The school runs in an open, transparent way.
- To ensure that school leaders, including governors, exercise strategic oversight of all aspects of safeguarding through appropriate training, staff meetings, etc.

# Section B. FIVE MAIN ELEMENTS OF THE POLICY

## 1. Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop

KCSIE September 2025 (para 345) states that ‘Good safeguarding requires continuing commitment from governing bodies, proprietors, and all staff to ensure the safety and welfare of children is embedded in all of the organisation’s processes and procedures, and consequentially enshrined in its ethos’.

Establishing a safe environment links to the school’s overall safeguarding arrangements and duty of care to all students.

The following policies are relevant:

- Staff Handbook
- Positive Management of Behaviour Policy
- Online Safety

[Durham Schools Portal - HR and Employee Services - HR Advice and Support - All Documents \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

### **Use of our school for non-school activities:**

Where we hire or rent out our school facilities/premises to organisations or individuals we will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2025 (para 166-167):

- We will seek assurance that the provider has appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place;
- We will ensure that arrangements are in place for the provider to liaise with us on these matters where appropriate, whether the children who attend are on our school roll or not;
- As a condition of use, these safeguarding requirements will be included in any transfer of control agreement and failure to comply will lead to termination of the agreement.
- We will expect providers to have the safeguarding arrangements set out in the following guidance in place: [Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

## **Pupils Arriving and Leaving School on Local Authority Arranged Transport**

We will inspect a sample of the badges of the drivers and PAs operating transport arranged by Integrated Passenger Transport Group periodically, to check the necessary badges are held and displayed. Any concerns or discrepancies will be reported as soon as possible to

IPTG Monitoring team (IPTMonitoring@durham.gov.uk). We will retain a record of the inspection and outcome to demonstrate these actions.

This links to the school's overall safeguarding arrangements and duty of care to all students.

The following policies are relevant:

### **2. Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children**

- Staff and Governors who have received Safer Recruitment training are listed on the front page of this document.
- Our school will comply with the requirements outlined in local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. 'Key Safeguarding Employment Standards' and in the DSCP Child Protection procedures as well as national documentation in Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2025, Part 3
- Our school will refer to its responsibilities regarding safeguarding and child protection in all adverts, job descriptions, and/or to its profile in the school, in the general information distributed with application forms. Annex C in Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2025 has specific details of the role of the DSL.
- Our school will adhere to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (amended 2020) and the Exceptions Order 1975 taking into account of any declarations at the point of interview and not during shortlisting from application.
- Our school will undertake appropriate pre-employment checks, including online searches, on all staff working in school, including criminal record checks (DBS checks), barred list checks and prohibition checks together with references and interview information, as detailed in Part 3: Safer Recruitment in Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2025. We will also ensure that relevant staff are made aware of their responsibilities to disclose anything relating to 'Disqualification Under the Childcare Act 2006. Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 – Gov.uk ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))
- We will follow good practice advice and inform shortlisted candidates that online searches will be carried out.
- As outlined in KSCIE 2025 (paras 235-253), the level of DBS certificate required, and whether a check for any prohibition, direction, sanction or restriction is required, will depend on the

role that is being offered and duties involved. As the majority of staff will be engaging in regulated activity, an enhanced DBS certificate, which includes barred list information, will be required for most appointments. All school personnel have an enhanced DBS. Risk assessments will be undertaken to determine the level of checks needed for any volunteers within our school – KCSIE 2025 (para 309-312)

### **In our school:**

- Volunteers will not be left unsupervised with groups of children, nor will they be in areas where they cannot be fully seen by the supervising teacher.
- In accepting the offer of help from volunteers, especially those unknown, staff are aware that schools in general are attractive places for ‘unsafe’ volunteers.
- Schools may be places where those with unhealthy interests in children seek to find employment (paid or otherwise). Staff should be vigilant about all inappropriate behaviour with children that gives cause for concern. The Headteacher and Governors must be aware of the Durham County Council Confidential Reporting Code arrangements.
- Supply staff – we ensure that appropriate DBS checks are carried out before employing supply staff, especially those not available via the Durham Supply Partnership. We will obtain written notification that the appropriate checks have been completed. We will check that the member of supply staff is the same person for whom these checks have been made.
- Our Governing Body will be aware of their responsibilities in connection with staff appointments and similarly aware of their liabilities especially if they fail to follow LA guidance.
- Members of our governing body will have an enhanced DBS and be subject to a Section 128 check.
- Volunteers and helpers will not be given tasks beyond their capabilities and therefore where they might feel under pressure.
- Volunteers and helpers should feel able to discuss difficulties with the teacher, who will respond with advice and additional guidance and supervision.
- Volunteers and helpers will not have the opportunity to feel that they are in charge and thus in a position of power, which may then be abused.
- Volunteers, helpers and staff new to the school are given documentation that covers behaviour guidelines for staff and volunteers.

### **Alternative Provision (KSCIE 2025, Para 168-171 & 331):**

Where we place a pupil with an alternative provision provider (AP Provider), we will understand that we continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil and will ensure that we are satisfied that the provider can meet the needs of the pupil by obtaining written confirmation from the AP Provider that appropriate checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment.

### 3. Training and supporting staff to equip them to appropriately recognise, respond to and support children who are vulnerable and may be in need of safeguarding

To ensure that we train and support our staff to be equipped to recognise, respond to and support children who are vulnerable and may need safeguarding, we will include:

- Creating the right culture and environment so that staff feel comfortable to discuss matters both within and outside (including online) the workplace;
- The Safeguarding Policy, which includes the policy and procedures to deal with child-on-child abuse;
- The Behaviour Policy – (which includes measures to prevent bullying, cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying and LGBT+). This policy takes the ‘Behaviour in Schools Guidance September 2025 into account. Behaviour in schools GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))
- The Staff Code of Conduct;
- The safeguarding response to children who go missing from education; and the role of the DSL, (including the identity of the DSL and any deputies).

Copies of policies and a copy of Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2025, will be provided to staff and volunteers at induction. All staff, supply staff and volunteers are **required to read** this.

All staff, volunteers and supply staff will be made aware of:

- Our local ‘early help’ process and their role in it;
- The process for making referrals to Children’s Social Care and section 17 and 47 that may follow a referral, along with the role they may be expected to play in such assessments;
- What to do if a child tells them he or she is being abused or neglected, along with maintaining an appropriate level of confidentiality, involving only those who need to be involved, and never promising a child that they will not tell anyone about their abuse.
- The practical government guidance document ‘[Guidance on Safer Working practice for Adults Who Work with Children and Young People](#)’, Safer Recruitment Consortium

All adults working in school will receive annual safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated. The DSL is responsible for ensuring that the training reflects new priorities and concerns within the County and other multi-agency local priorities. Adults will also receive updated training and guidance throughout the year as necessary.

The date and the names of delegates at these sessions are recorded and held securely to ensure all staff are appropriately trained.

## **Staff Responsible for Safeguarding**

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies will be given sufficient time and training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out their roles. This will be updated every two years and record of this training will be kept. In addition to this formal training, their knowledge and skills will continually be updated through a range of means (for example via e-bulletins, attendance at safeguarding networks or through reading), at regular intervals, and at least annually, to keep up with any developments.

### **4. Raising awareness of other safeguarding issues, boosting resilience and equipping children with the skills needed to help keep them safe**

We raise other related issues with children and their parents/carers in the following ways:

#### **Children and Young People**

We are mindful that children are kept safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in schools. All schools in the county have Smoothwall filtering and monitoring systems in place for this and other potentially risky content. Our named member of SLT, who is a DSL will review these records regularly to see whether it links up with other safeguarding concerns about particular individuals. Online safety is continually emphasised in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2025. Teaching online safety in schools – GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)).

Other themes are addressed through our PSHCE and RSE programmes, assemblies, outside visitors and trainers. These may be part of our typical planned curriculum or in response to issues arising in school, the community or nationally.

Names (and photographs) of staff and adults will be on display in school that children can speak to if they have concerns (school, family or community issues).

#### **Parents/Carers**

Our school brochure, web site and other means of communication with parents will re-enforce the message that our school is committed to the welfare and protection of all children in its care. School staff and governors take this duty of care very seriously.

Newsletters, letters to parents about specific issues, our school web site, personal tutor phone calls and parents meetings are used to disseminate and re-enforce key safeguarding and child protection information.

In addition, we also offer events/briefings and workshops that they may attend on particular issues.

Parents are told that it is essential that school records are kept up to date. Parents are asked to keep school informed of any changes. School will accordingly update records held to reflect:

- Current address and telephone contacts. We are aware that, as a school, it is good practice to hold more than one emergency contact number for each child and this is particularly important for children who are a safeguarding or welfare concern
- Which adults have parental responsibility
- Court orders which may be in force
- Children on the Child Protection list
- The child's name at birth and any subsequent names (taking care over unusual spellings)
- Any other changes to home circumstances

## **5. Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse**

The culture of our school is that 'it could happen here'. Staff are trained to identify indicators of abuse and are aware of circumstances that could potentially make children and young people more vulnerable to abuse.

### **Recording concerns**

ALL concerns and disclosures passed to the DSL's must be entered onto the concerns module in the Sleuth electronic recording system. The more relevant details staff document the better (approximate size, colour of injury, which arm, if burn is scabbing over etc.) Staff can express concern or sensitively remark about an injury (open ended questions), but should not ask direct questions. They should never do so in front of other children.

Disclosures of worrying information by children must also be recorded on Sleuth. Information entered onto the concerns module of Sleuth can only be read by the DSL's who are automatically notified on entry.

'All staff should know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality.

This means only involving those who need to be involved, eg DSL, Deputy or Children's Social Care.

*‘Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child. All staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.’* Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2025, Part 1 (paras 15-16)

Staff should write the exact words used by the child. Any original notes/jottings/reminders made by the adult must be stapled to the form as first-hand information that could be important if a case went to court, or scanned into the Sleuth. Remember, **do not investigate**.

**Please remember:**

- 1) The child should be allowed to make the disclosure at his/her own pace and in his/her own way.
- 2) The member of staff should avoid interrupting except to clarify what the child is saying, but
- 3) Should not probe for any information that the child does not volunteer

### **Listening to Children and Receiving Disclosures**

- We embrace our role as a listening school where children can discuss concerns with any member of staff or adult who works with them. Staff (teaching and support) will make time and be available should children approach them with a situation they are worried about.
- Concerns must be taken seriously and at face-value. It is easy to make speedy judgements based on previous knowledge of the child or young person.
- Staff receiving a disclosure are unable to promise ‘keeping a secret’ or confidentiality. They will need to explain that depending on what the child says they might need to share the information with someone who deals with these concerns in school
- If the child does not wish to continue and say anything further the adult should pass on the concern to the DSL that might wish to keep an eye on that student and may well be aware of other issues of concern.

*‘Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child. All staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.’* Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2025, Part One (paras 15-16).

- When the member of staff next comes across the child concerned, it would be appropriate to ask how they are and remind them that they are able to come and talk when they wish.
- Staff should never speak to another sibling in the family to make enquiries: to investigate concerns is not the role of the school and parents/carers would be rightly aggrieved.

### **Recording Concerns**

ALL concerns and disclosures passed to the designated safeguarding lead must be recorded on the school's Sleuth's electronic monitoring system. All concerns recorded should be factual; staff should avoid using emotive language and recording their opinions.

Staff should write the exact words used by the child. Any original notes/jottings/reminders made by the adult must be stapled to the form as first-hand information that could be important if a case went to court or scanned into the electronic monitoring system.

The more relevant details staff document, the better (eg: approximate size, colour of injury, which arm, if burn is scabbing over etc.). Staff can express concern about an injury (open ended questions) but should not ask direct questions. They should never do so in front of other children.

### **Concerns about staff members or other adults in school**

- If there is a concern about another member or adult working in school, the matter must be passed straight to the Headteacher. The member of staff must not be spoken to. If the concern regards the Headteacher, this should be passed onto the Chair of Governors.

Further information is included in Section G of this Policy and KCSIE 2025, Part 4: **Safeguarding concerns or allegations made about staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors**

All information received is stored in the child's Sleuth record. Where this is in electronic form, we provide appropriate levels of access to information. Records are kept securely in locked storage and away from the child's individual school records. (The child's individual file is marked to show the existence of the additional 'concern' file). Our designated safeguarding leads can access these documents in an emergency or in the event of an enquiry for information by the MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) Team, for example.

We keep a simple central 'chronology of significant events' for all children in school. This assists, should the MASH make contact about issues beyond school and inform any other concerns in school.

We ensure that records include:

- a clear and detailed summary of the concern
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- notes of any actions taken, decisions reached and the outcome

### **Discussing concerns with the First Contact Service 03000 26 79 79**

We use the local authority Referral Form for notifying First Contact of concerns. Early help referrals are completed online using the following link: [Early Help Referral](#) - via DCC CRM system.

Procedures and guidance detailing local multi-agency arrangements, including detailed information about the management of individual cases, may be found at the [Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership](#) website.

If a concern is taken up as a **referral** under section 47: Child Protection, actual or likelihood of significant harm, parents or carers will be informed of this **unless to do so would place the child at further risk of harm.**

If the child requires immediate medical attention staff will accompany the child to the nearest Accident and Emergency Department. First Contact will be informed immediately if the injuries are linked to a child protection matter, so an appropriate Paediatrician sees the child. The Director of Children and Young People's Services will be informed and parents will be notified of the action taken.

If the situation is an emergency and staff are unable to speak to First Contact, we will phone the Police on 0845 60 60 365 and ask to speak to a colleague in the Vulnerability Unit concerning a child.

**Police Switchboard: 0345 6060365 or 101**  
**Ask for the nearest local Vulnerability Unit to school**

## **Discussions with First Contact will be followed up in writing**

Discussions of concern and requests for support will be followed up in writing, using the referral form. The information will be sent via secure e-mail to First Contact. Early help referrals are completed online using the following link:

[https://doitonline.durham.gov.uk/service/Early\\_Help\\_Referral](https://doitonline.durham.gov.uk/service/Early_Help_Referral) via DCC CRM system. A copy is kept on the child's concern file.

If a member of staff feels that the DSL and/or Headteacher are not taking concerns seriously enough, then it is appropriate for them to tell that person that they are going to consult with First Contact themselves.

**'Any staff member** who has a concern about a child's welfare should follow the referral processes set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2025, Part 1.

<p><b>First Contact Service <a href="mailto:firstcontact@durham.gov.uk">firstcontact@durham.gov.uk</a></b> <b>Telephone: 03000 26 79 79</b></p>
---

### **Attendance at Strategy meetings if assessed to be child protection concern**

Strategy meetings are one of four multi-agency meetings as part of Child Protection processes. Local multi-agency procedures has detailed guidance about these meetings [www.durhamscp.org.uk](http://www.durhamscp.org.uk)

School staff may be invited to a strategy meeting. These multi-agency meetings are called to decide whether the threshold for an S47 enquiry should commence to investigate into the concerns that have been raised.

These meetings may be called at short notice and we recognise that appropriate staff from this school should attend wherever possible. If the school is the referring agency they should be invited to attend these meetings. The school has a suitable room which can be used as a venue if appropriate.

Staff should make available any electronic or handwritten notes, dated and signed, as well as other records from the concern file including the single agency chronology of concerns. Any further written evidence from the child: stories, drawings etc. should be brought to the meeting.

In school, staff should monitor the child discreetly for any further concerns or signs that are worrying and give support and reassurance to the child.

All information should be treated with discretion and confidentiality and shared in accordance with the National Guidance on information sharing and the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.

If concerns are not substantiated following the section 47 enquiries our school will work with other agencies to determine what further support the family and child require. The school will continue to monitor and support the child.

# Section C. OVERVIEW: SAFEGUARDING

## 1. Definition of ‘Safeguarding’

Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2025, defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as:

*‘Protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children’s health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. ‘Children’ includes everyone under the age of 18’. (paras 2-3)*

## 2. Safeguarding within Elemore Hall School

Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. School staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children, to prevent concerns from escalating. Schools and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children working with our three safeguarding partners in Durham, Safeguarding Children Partnership – Durham County Council, Durham Constabulary and the Clinical Commissioning Groups to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

Safeguarding children permeates all aspects of our work as a school, with a preventative role to inform and boost the resilience of all students by enhancing protective factors in their lives.

Accordingly, this policy links with many other related policies in school:

- Positive Management of Behaviour policy
- Anti-bullying policy, including cyber-bullying, hazing and other forms of peer-to-peer abuse
- Health and Safety policies
- Medication in school/First Aid policies/Pupil Health Policy
- Intimate care policy
- School visits including risk-assessments
- Online Safety
- SEN/LAC
- Equal Opportunities
- Relationship and Sex Education Policy

This policy is also linked to local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Current up-to-date documentation can be found at <https://durham-scp.org.uk/> and include

- Managing Allegations against Staff (Durham online local partnership safeguarding arrangements and policies)
- County Durham Practice Framework: Single Assessment Procedure & Practice Guidance.
  - Keeping Children Safe in Education. September 2025

### 3. Safeguarding throughout school life

#### Caring ethos

We aim to create and maintain a **caring ethos** where all children and adults feel safe, secure and valued. If children feel happy and enjoy school this will encourage good attendance and then create conditions in which they can do their best in every area of school life. Our school operates as a listening school where children are able to approach adults with concerns. These will be taken seriously and relevant multi-agency safeguarding procedures followed without delay if there is a risk/likelihood of, or actual **significant harm**.

#### Curriculum

Children have access to an appropriate curriculum, including the teaching of relationships and sex education and health education from 2020, differentiated to meet their needs. This enables them to learn to develop the necessary skills to build self-esteem, respect others, defend those in need, and resolve conflict without resorting to violence. Children learn skills to question and challenge to enable them to make informed choices now and later in life. A protective factor for children is personal resilience including strong social and emotional skills. All work with children which boosts confidence and self-esteem is valuable to protect them from peer pressure and outside influences detrimental to their physical and mental well-being.

Children are encouraged to express and discuss their ideas, thoughts and feelings through a variety of activities and have access to a range of cultural opportunities which promote respect and empathy for others. As part of our new Prevent duty under s.26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, we are aware of the importance of building pupils' resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist views. Schools can build pupils' resilience to radicalisation by providing a safe environment for debating controversial issues and helping children and young people understand how they can influence and participate in decision-making.

Relationships and Sex Education, Health education, the Culture programme, Art, Music, Drama, PE, English and Humanities are some of the areas of the curriculum in which children can discuss and debate important issues including lifestyles, health, safety and well-being (physical and emotional), sex education and healthy relationships, family life, child care and parenting, forced marriage, domestic abuse, religious beliefs and practices as well as human rights issues. These subjects can be used to teach children and young people to recognise and manage risk, make safer choices, and recognise when pressure from others threatens their personal safety and wellbeing. They can develop effective ways of resisting pressure, including knowing when, where and how to get help.

## **Universal services and specialist support staff**

The following professionals are also available to support individual children in school:

- The school nurse
- Educational Psychologist
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service Learning mentors

The following **visitors** also contribute to our work to safeguard and promote the welfare of our students:

- Youth Workers
- Specialist Nurses
- GP
- EWO

### **The Extended Day / Residential**

A simple breakfast is available to all pupils to ensure they don't start their school day hungry, particularly if they travel long distance and leave home early.

The extended day and residential provision at Elemore Hall is very important for many pupils as is the structured and unstructured social time around breaks and lunchtime. These all provide further opportunities for students to develop positive and caring relationships with adults, who themselves will be trained to be aware of signs and behaviours that could suggest concerns

Supportive relationships outside the home, such as those with adults in school and other children are additional protective factors that boost children's resilience. Staff will always work with children in a professional way and are reminded to respond to disclosures sensitively and appropriately. All adults in school know the names of the designated safeguarding leads and should be made aware of their responsibility to pass on any issues of concern without delay and make a written record.

## **Working with parents and carers**

Our school believes in effective communication with parents and carers. We welcome parent/carer views and concerns about the welfare of their children and use this feedback to regularly review our practices. Parental views are obtained in the following ways:

- Regular phone calls to parents/carers by personal tutors
- PAMs meetings
- Parental view questionnaires.

We keep parents informed about important and topical issues, including child protection elements of safeguarding, in the following ways: Newsletters, letters home, website, text message service, regular personal phone calls.

We aim to have good working relationships with parents and carers and to work in partnership with them through transparency and honesty. However, we do not forget that their child's needs and welfare are our paramount concern, thus obtaining consent to take matters further is not always appropriate. This obligation is set out in our school website in our Statement of Purpose.

## **Section D. CHILD PROTECTION WITHIN SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS FOR ALL CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE IN SCHOOL**

There are a series of layers of care and intervention ranging from safeguarding for all/universal services (single-agency activities) through to multi-agency work under the Children Acts 1989 to 2018:

- Safeguarding arrangements in school
- Early Help within universal services
- More complex cases requiring Early Help
- Child in Need yet consent is required as for Levels 2 and 3
- Child Protection
- Durham Safeguarding Children's Partnership guidance and procedures

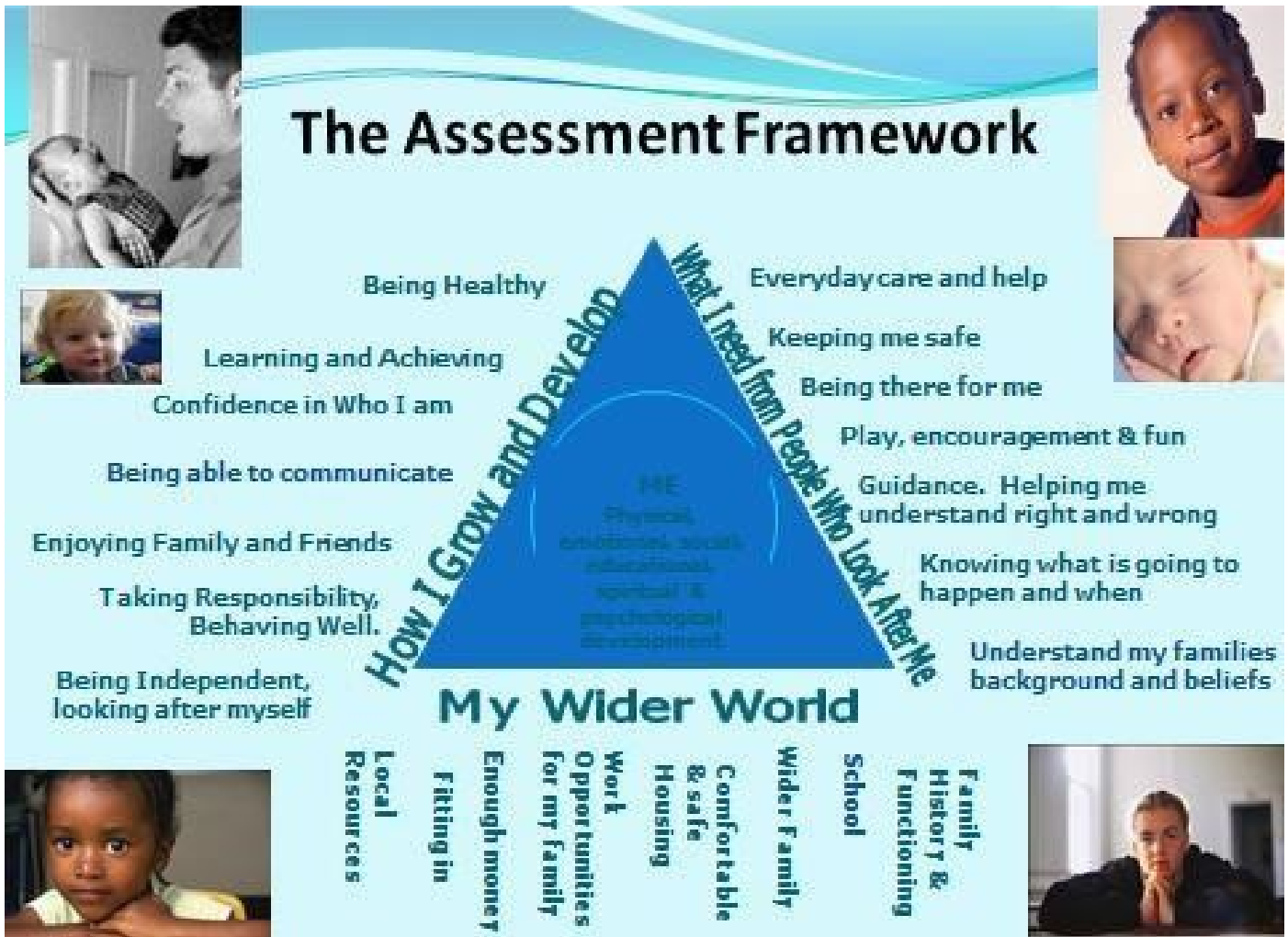
### **The Growing up in County Durham Strategy**

The Growing up in County Durham Strategy was prepared jointly by all public services and voluntary and community services including the Council, local health services and the police who work together to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families through the Children and Families Partnership. [It can be accessed here](#)

# 1. Life at Home

The Framework for Assessment triangle, reproduced below, summarises every aspect of a child's life under three headings:

- Child's developmental needs (How I grow and develop)
- Parenting capacity (What I need from people that look after me)
- Family and environmental factors (My wider world)



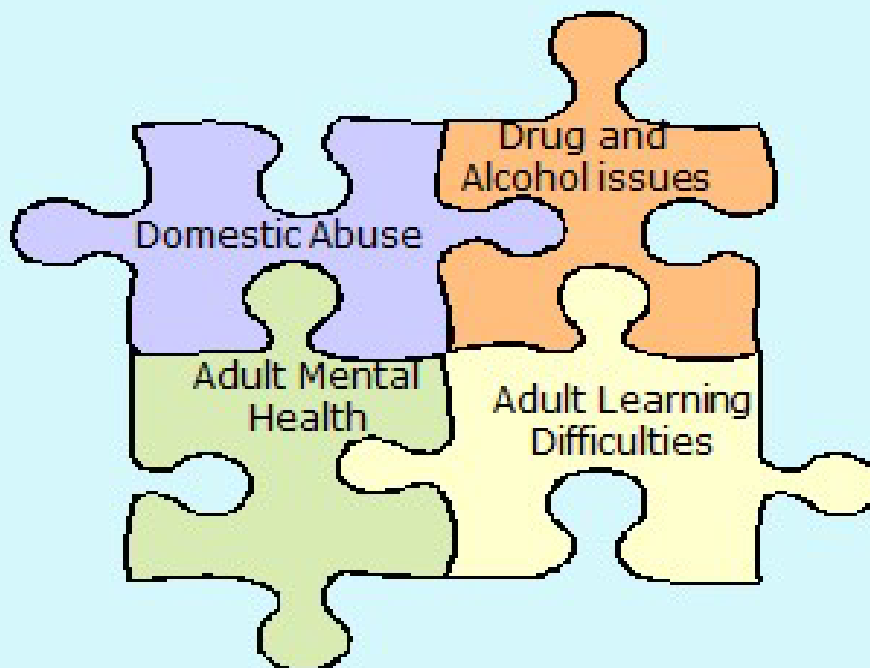
Aspects from all three domains combine in home life and staff and adults in school should be mindful of these connections as they work with children and their parents/carers in school.

This school believes that it is essential to work with parents and carers in the best interests of their children. However, good relationships with parents and carers should not detract from our primary concern which is the welfare of children in this school.

Staff are made aware in training of the ‘toxic quad’ issues in home life that could have an impact on the way children are parented (Munroe, 2010). The Government research into Serious Case Reviews reveals that the presence of one or more of the following issues could have a detrimental impact on parenting of children in that household:

- Domestic abuse (violence)
- Substance misuse (alcohol and or drugs)
- Adult mental health
- Learning disabilities

## Toxic Factors in Family Life



Neglect is the largest category for children being on the Child Protection list (nationally and in Durham). Durham DSCP have produced new Neglect Practice Guidance (Revised 2017) linked to the Tackling Neglect Multi-Agency Strategy 2017. It can be found here: [Early Help Strategy](#)

## 2. Signs and behaviours of concern

*'All staff should be aware of indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation, so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse.'* KCSIE September 2025 (para 4).

**All** of our staff are familiar with KCSIE September 2025 and their responsibilities highlighted within this (paras 18 to 48).

Paragraph 18 of the document emphasises that staff should be particularly alert to the need for early help for the following groups of children:

- Is disabled and has specific additional needs;
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP));
- Is a young carer;
- Is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines;
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from care or home;
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited;
- Has a family member in prison or is affected by parental offending;
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse;
- Is misusing alcohol and other drugs themselves;
- Has returned home to their family from care;
- Is at risk of 'honour' based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage;
- Is a privately fostered child;
- Is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

*'All staff should receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training at induction. The training should be regularly updated. In addition, all staff should receive safeguarding and child protection updates as required, and at least annually, to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively'*

Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2025 (para 12).

Our school understands that it is best practice to discuss concerns with parents/carers before contacting First Contact Service (providing this does not present a delay), or unless by doing so the child would be put at further risk of harm. First Contact Service: 03000 267979.

**Where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm, it is important that a referral to children's social care (and if appropriate the police) is made immediately.**

Anyone can make a referral. When referrals are not made by the DSL, the DSL should be informed, as soon as possible, that a referral has been made. Direct contact with the DSL or ADSL and entry onto Sleuth.

### 3. Early Help Assessment Procedure & Practice Guidance

*'All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help.'*  
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2025, (para 6). This relates to work with other universal agencies and following DSCP procedures and guidance.

The Early Help Assessment and Child and Family Plan has replaced what was the 'Single Assessment' and are much more streamlined, family friendly and signs of safety/wellbeing focussed. These can be accessed through the Children's Services Portal.

Our school is aware that 'no single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances'. Also that 'if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, **everyone** who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action'. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (para 3)

This school believes that information sharing is a key element when delivering coordinated services for children and young people. It is essential to enable early help and support and for promoting child protection and welfare. Our staff understand when, why and how they should share information so that they can do so confidently and appropriately as part of their day-to-day practice.

This school works with the consent of parents and carers to jointly undertake assessments where an unmet need has been identified. However, we are aware that it may be necessary to meet with other services and agencies even if this consent for a 'Team around the Family' (TAF) meeting is not forthcoming. These professional's meetings are important to share concerns, suggest ways forward along with further work to encourage participation by parents/carers in early help processes. One Point colleagues and Early Help Advisors are also a useful source of advice in these circumstances.

Guidance on Early Help in County Durham can be found [here](#). This includes information on how to make a request for additional early help and provides details of Locality Early Help Conversations.

Professionals can make a request for (additional) early help by completing an online Early Help Request Form on the [Childrens Service Portal](#) or by telephoning the Early Help Triage Team on 03000 267 979, Option 1, Option 2, Option 4, (Mon – Thurs 08.30 – 17.00, Fri 08.30 – 16.30)

A TAF is an early means of intervention to provide appropriate advice and support for the parents/carers and young person by working with appropriate local agencies through Team around the Family arrangements. See <http://www.durham-scp.org.uk>

Our pupils are referred to their local One Point Hub and Families First Team.

#### **Durham Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**

Where concerns are identified as amber or red on the [MASH Process Pathway](#) (page 14), our school will cooperate promptly and fully, with relevant information, to inform further assessments undertaken by the MASH team using the Durham Threshold Guidance.

#### 4. Child in Need

Section 17 of the 1989 Children Act  
Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

*“A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989” KCSIE 2025 (para 60).*

This school recognises the importance of this early support and intervention work in more complex cases undertaken with the consent of parents and carers and follows the thresholds guidance document which sets out local criteria for action and includes links to additional information which may assist professional judgement in understanding and subsequently meeting a child and family’s needs <https://durham-scp.org.uk/practitioners/> [Durham Threshold Guidance](#)

#### 5. Child Protection and Significant Harm

Section 47 of the 1989 Children Act  
Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

*Local authorities, with the help of other organisations as appropriate, have a duty to make enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Such enquiries enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child’s welfare and must be initiated where there are concerns about maltreatment. This includes all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation. Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2025 (para 61)*

Significant harm is where some children are in need because they are **suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm**. This is the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children.

#### 6. Prepare for the unexpected

Staff are aware from their training that some children might display worrying signs/symptoms or disclose information suggesting abuse, when they have never previously given rise to concern. Staff must contact the DSL for child protection **without delay** so concerns can be discussed with **First Contact Service** as soon as possible. In all cases it should be borne in mind that other siblings might be at risk in the household as well as the one presenting concerns in school. *‘Staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of **‘it could happen here’** where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child staff should always act in the **best** interests of the child.* Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2025 (para 59)

## 7. Low Level Concerns

KCSIE 2025 (Para 428-449)

As part of our safeguarding culture where ALL concerns regarding adults are shared responsibly in line with our school's safeguarding reporting systems and will be recorded in writing and held securely on our Sleuth System. Records will be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified and appropriate actions taken.

We have also set out our Low Levels Concerns Policy within our Staff Code of Conduct.

We will ensure that:

- Staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others;
- Staff know how to share any low-level safeguarding concerns and are empowered to do so;
- Unprofessional behaviour is addressed and the individual is supported to correct it at an early stage;
- We will provide a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised;
- We will use concerns to help identify any weakness in the school safeguarding system.

We will instil a culture where staff feel safe to report any concerns using our safeguarding reporting system identified in this policy. We would also encourage the staff member themselves to report any behaviour that could be classed as a low-level concern. Where the report has been made by a third party, as much evidence as possible will be gathered by the head teacher/principal from the person reporting the concern, the individual named and any witnesses. All of this will be recorded to determine whether any further action needs to be taken alongside a recorded rationale as to the decisions taken.

In the case of reports about supply staff and contractors, we will report any concerns to their line managers so that any concerning, problematic or inappropriate patterns of behaviour can be identified.

We will retain information regarding low level concerns until the time recommended in – KCSIE 2025 (para 444) which states at least until person leaves school's employment.

*'Low-level concerns should not be included in references unless they relate to issues which would normally be included in a reference, for example, misconduct or poor performance. It follows that a low-level concern which relates exclusively to safeguarding (and not to misconduct or poor performance) should not be referred to in a reference. However, where a low-level concern (or group of concerns) meets the harm threshold for referral to the LADO and found to be substantiated, it should be referred to in a reference.'* KCSIE 2025, para 445.

## Section E. MULTI-AGENCY WORK IN CHILD PROTECTION

For up to date school responsibilities and LA arrangements and procedures please see the local partnership website - <https://durham-scp.org.uk/practitioners/>

### 1. Initial Child Protection Conference: School Responsibilities

See local partnership procedures for more details, <https://durham-scp.org.uk/practitioners/>

Following the final strategy meeting (some complex cases like forced marriage, fabricated and induced illness and organisational abuse may require several strategy meetings) a decision might be made to hold an Initial Child Protection Conference. This work continues within Family First teams within the County.

A conference will be called if there is thought to be an on-going risk or likelihood of significant harm to the child(ren). The date will be within **15 working days** after the last strategy meeting.

#### School responsibilities

- **Attendance at Conference**

It is understood that appropriate school staff should make every effort to attend (unless the date coincides with school holidays).

- **Preparation of a report**

Schools would be expected to prepare a report and may wish to amplify and develop information provided on the referral form <https://durham-scp.org.uk/practitioners/> as the basis of their report.

- **Chronology of significant events**

A single-agency chronology should also be produced for this meeting using the template available on the DSCP website [www.durham-scp.org.uk](http://www.durham-scp.org.uk) The detailed 'in house' school chronology should be streamlined to include key relevant incidents noted by school.

- **Sharing of the report**

The report should be shared with parents/carers of the child at least **two working days** before the conference. Part of the report may also be shared with the young person, where age-appropriate. This will give the family a chance to question or clarify any issues raised within the report prior to the conference.

The report will be passed to the Conference Clerk via the secure e-mail system ready for dissemination to other professionals attending the conference.

## **2. Membership of a Core Group**

See local partnership safeguarding arrangements and procedures [www.durham-scp.org.uk](http://www.durham-scp.org.uk)

This school recognises that membership of a core group is a responsibility that necessitates time, commitment to attend regular meetings and complete the work detailed in the Child Protection Plan.

The merged multi-agency chronology will be regularly updated as part of this on- going work.

## **3. Review Child Protection Conference**

See local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and procedures [www.durham-scp.org.uk](http://www.durham-scp.org.uk)

The school will complete the relevant report for the first review conference, after 10 weeks and for any subsequent reviews at intervals of 5 months. The report will detail work undertaken by the school with parents/carers and the child to complete the tasks assigned in the Child Protection Plan. This report should be shared **7 days** before the conference takes place. This report will detail the progress made towards the tasks outlines on the Child Protection Plan.

## Section F. INFORMATION SHARING

Staff at our school are aware of the need to share information appropriately. KCSIE 2025 (para 114-122). If there are concerns that sharing of information with individuals could result in significant harm to any individual, legal advice should be sought before the information is shared.

Our school takes care to ensure that information about a child is only given to the appropriate external people or agencies. Staff will take names and ring back via a main switchboard if unsure. All staff within school will be aware of the confidential nature of personal information about a child and the need for maintaining confidentiality. They will seek advice about parental responsibility issues if unsure.

### 1. Parents/Carers

Staff and Headteacher must **not** automatically contact parents if there is a disclosure by the child or there are other concerns that the child may be at risk of significant harm. Rather schools should discuss concerns with the First Contact Service. Information should not be shared with parents if there was a likelihood that by doing so it might place the child at further risk of harm.

Parents must be aware that once matters have been referred to the First Contact Service the school can only explain the procedure and is not able to give 'progress reports' on the case.

### 2. School Staff

There is a delicate balance to be struck between alerting members of staff to the concern about the child and the need to protect the child from too many people knowing. Information should only be divulged on a 'need to know' basis. Other members of staff need to know sufficient to prepare them to act with sensitivity to a distressed pupil. They do not need to know details.

### 3. Children transferring to another school

When a child on the Child Protection List moves to another school the designated lead professional will inform the new school immediately and arrange the handover of confidential information separately from other records.

If a child for whom there are other existing serious concerns transfers to another school, the new receiving school will be informed immediately and written records will follow. Both schools should maintain evidence of the secure transfer and receipt of information. If the school is within the County or close by, information could be handed over personally from

one safeguarding lead to another. A form should be prepared for both schools to sign to confirm receipt of the records. Elemore Hall utilises the Sleuth recording system for all information, including safeguarding, for all pupils.

Data that is not being transferred to another school should be kept in line with the school's Data Retention Policy, e.g. electively home educated pupils or moving to full time employment.

#### **4. County Guidance and Protocols**

- ['Information sharing'](#) on the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership website
- [HM Government, Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers.](#)
- [Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures Manual](#)
- [The Data Protection Act 2018](#)

**Further advice about legal issues is available from Corporate Legal Services**

[LegalservicesSLA@durham.gov.uk](mailto:LegalservicesSLA@durham.gov.uk) 03000 266 196

# Section G. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

See Part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2025 (paras 356-449).

[The Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures Manual](#) provides information about dealing with allegations against staff and volunteers (including supply staff) who have contact with children and young people in their work or activities.

Allegations of abuse by adults and peers in schools must be investigated in accordance with the DSCP procedures, and when dealing with any allegation against adults and peers, it is vital to keep the welfare of the child as the central concern. However, as in all child protection issues, a balance needs to be struck between supporting and protecting the child and keeping the effects of possibly false allegations to a minimum. Thus, urgent consideration should be given to the substance of the allegations.

## Receiving an allegation

- On receiving an allegation, the Headteacher will proceed in line with recognised procedures - consulting immediately with LA officers (LADO, Local Authority Designated Officers, and/or informing the First Contact Service. If the LADO is unavailable there should be no delay in discussing with First Contact. **The Headteacher must not start to investigate.**

If an allegation is made for a person not directly employed by the school recognised procedures should be followed. This includes supply staff, sports coaches and any individual or organisation using the school premises for the purposes of running activities for children (for example community groups, sports associations, or service providers that run extra-curricular activities). Under no circumstances should a school cease the use of a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns without liaising with the LADO. KCSIE 2025 (para 377-380)

Allegations regarding the Headteacher should be passed to the Chair of Governors. Should this lead to delay, the person receiving details of the allegation should follow the advice above and report the matter immediately to the LADO and First Contact Service. At this stage the Headteacher should not be informed of the allegation (the same process as for any member of staff or adult in school). The Chair of Governors should be informed as soon as possible and asked to contact the LADO.

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)  
Sharon Lewis / Louise Brooks 03000 268835  
First Contact Service 03000 26 79 79  
[CYPSSLADOsecure@durham.gov.uk](mailto:CYPSSLADOsecure@durham.gov.uk)

Where it is suspected that a crime has been committed, then the matter should be reported to the police with immediate effect.

### **Carrying out an investigation**

- Investigations will be carried out by the appropriate agencies
- In dealing with any allegation the Headteacher and Governors need to balance:
  - The seriousness of the allegation.
  - The risk of harm to pupils.
  - Possible contamination of evidence.
  - The welfare of the person concerned.
- Suspension of the member of staff/adult in school will be considered:
  - (a) if there are any grounds for doubt as to the suitability of the employee to continue to work
  - (b) where suspension may assist in the completion of an investigation.
- Suspension will be carried out in line with Local Authority guidelines. Headteachers should contact Human Resources for guidance ([HRSchools@durham.gov.uk](mailto:HRSchools@durham.gov.uk)).
- Suspension should not be an automatic response. Wherever possible, redeployment should be considered as an alternative considering the seriousness of the allegation made. KCSIE 2025 Part 4, (para 383-390).
- During the investigation support will be offered to both the pupil making the allegation and the adult/peer concerned.
- A disciplinary investigation will be carried out only after Police and Intervention and Assessment Teams propose to take no further action.
- Detailed records will be kept by all parties involved.

### **Recommendations following an investigation**

- Where recommendations are made to school regarding the outcome of a Child Protection investigation the school will advise Children and Young People's Services regarding their response to the recommendation. For example, if a person is suspended and returns to school, the date of that return should be communicated.

The following definitions are now used when determining the outcome of allegation investigations:

- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation;
- **Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive or cause harm to the person subject to the allegation;
- **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation;
- **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.
- **Unfounded:** to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made.

Where it is considered that an individual has engaged in conduct that has harmed (or is likely to harm) a child or if a person other wide poses a risk to harm a child, the Headteacher and/or Governors will make a referral to the DBS in line with their legal requirement to do so. (KCSIE 2025 paras 406-407)

## Section H. **SAFE TOUCH**

### **Physical contact other than to control or restrain**

Our school has a policy/guidelines on the positive management of behaviour which includes use of touch, and covers points such as:

- Using physical contact to demonstrate exercises or techniques, for example, in PE, sports coaching or other practical subjects.
- Administering First Aid
- Giving appropriate comfort to a child who is distressed
- Recognising that physical contact is a sensitive issue for some cultural groups
- Acknowledging that physical contact becomes increasingly open to question as children reach and go through adolescence
- Ensuring a consistent approach where staff and pupils are of different genders
- Acknowledging that innocent and well-intentioned physical contact can sometimes be misconstrued
- Having a prescribed handling policy for children requiring complex or repeated physical handling, with specific training for staff who deal with them.

## Section I. **PHYSICAL CONTROL AND RESTRICTIVE PHYSICAL INTERVENTION: Use of Reasonable Force**

Our school has a policy on the use of restrictive physical interventions covering the appropriate use of reasonable force that all staff are aware of and follow.

Our school policy relates to the following: [DfE Guidance: Use of Reasonable Force in Schools](#)

Our school Policy on the Use of Restrictive Physical Interventions gives guidance on:

- When it is appropriate for staff to use physical control and restraint;
- Who is allowed to use physical control and restraint;
- What forms physical control and restraint may take in particular circumstances;
- What forms of physical control and restraint are not acceptable;
- How the additional vulnerability of pupils with SEND, mental health problems or medical conditions will be considered;
- Ensure our duties under the Equality Act 2010 are considered;
- Recording of incidents where physical handling has been used;
- The Policy also makes it clear that corporal punishment is NOT allowed.

## Section J. THE PREVENT DUTY

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a due on certain bodies, including schools, to have ‘due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism’. The DfE has produced non-statutory advice for schools; [‘The Prevent Duty: Safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation’](#).

This work is part of schools’ broader safeguarding responsibilities and protecting children from other harms (drugs, gangs, neglect, and sexual exploitation). During the process of radicalisation, it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised. The advice summarises areas in which schools might be involved: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training, IT policies and building children’s resilience to radicalisation.

### **In our school:**

- Staff can identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation. Information or concerns are shared with the DSL in the same way as other information that might be a safeguarding concern, who will then follow procedures in line with DSCP guidance.
- Policies and procedures are in line with those of DCC, Durham Constabulary and the DSCP.
- Training needs more widely should be made in the light of a school’s assessment of risk. However, it is a minimum requirement that the DSL undertakes Prevent awareness training. They can provide advice and support to other staff and may need to contact the relevant officers at Durham Constabulary or Community Safety.
- Throughout the life of the school as well as in specific lessons to build pupils’ resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist views.
- Robust IT policies are mindful of new guidance within Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2025 and DfE guidance [‘Teaching Online Safety in School’](#).

[Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales](#), notes:

*Education settings should be spaces in which people can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including, where appropriate, terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge these ideas. (para 176) Schools in England must also be mindful of their existing duties on political impartiality and to ensure the balanced presentation of political issues. (para 184)*

We will follow the County Durham Prevent Referral Flowchart (September 2025, Appendix 2) when any concerns are identified. Through discussion with the specialist colleagues at Durham Constabulary it may be appropriate to make a referral to the Channel programme. This programme focuses on support at an early stage, tailor-made to the individual young person. Engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary. A school representative may be asked to be a member if a student from the school is to be discussed at the Channel panel.

[FIMUNorth@CTPNE.police.uk](mailto:FIMUNorth@CTPNE.police.uk)

<https://www.durham.police.uk/tua/tell-us-about/ath/possible-terrorist-activity/>

[Community.safety@durham.gov.uk](mailto:Community.safety@durham.gov.uk)

## Section K. CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)

We ensure all of our staff are trained to be aware of young people who could be at risk of sexual exploitation. See Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2025 (para 38-40).

Refer also to:

[Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#)

[Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges](#)

CSE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in any sexual activity and can be experienced by both boys and girls: It is a form of child sexual abuse.

Sexual abuse may involve both physical and non-contact activities. It can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence. Our staff know that some children may not realise they are being exploited, for example, if they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship, and will handle these situations appropriately.

Durham DSCP has a section of their website devoted to resources, guidance, and a risk assessment matrix that assists schools [Child Exploitation Risk Assessment Information Form](#)

For concerns relating to sexualized behaviour by children and young people, the Brook Traffic Light Tool <https://brook.org.uk> is a useful resource. This information can be used to supplement other information from the 0-19 levels of need document as part of a wider referral to First Contact.

## Section L. FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

Whilst **all** staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific **legal duty on teachers**. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher **must** report this to the police. KCSIE, September 2025 (Para 42) says

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. This is illegal in the UK (The FGM Act 2003), abusive and has varied long-lasting consequences for the young girl.

There is a FGM Helpline also on 0800 028 3550. There is also a [useful website provided by the NSPCC](#). Guidance leaflets have been produced by the Home Office & the National FGM Centre:

<https://nationalfgmcentre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/FGM-Schools-Guidance-National-FGM-Centre.pdf>

Female genital mutilation: resource pack – GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

FGM Awareness & Prevention Training iHASCO

## Section M. ONLINE SAFETY

KCSIE – September 2025 (paras 134-151)

Our school has a separate Online Safety Policy which links to KSCIE 2025 and take account [DfE 'Teaching Online Safety in Schools'](#) guidance.

There is a Professionals Online Safety Helpline 0844 381 4772

Schools are reminded that a criminal offence has been committed if a person aged 18 or over intentionally communicates with a child under 16, who the adult does not reasonably believe to be 16 or over, if the communication is sexual or if it is intended to encourage the child to make a communication which is sexual. The offence will be committed whether or not the child communicates with the adult. This is the offence of sexual communication with a child under section 67 of the Serious Crime Act 2015.

On the DSCP website there is further information at: <https://durham-scp.org.uk/parents-and-carers/online-safety/>

# Section N. CHILD ON CHILD SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Our school has a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse including sexual violence and sexual harassment. Our staff are aware that children are capable of abusing their peers and that this can happen both in and out of school, online and offline.

Refer also to:

[Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#)

LFGFL '[Undressed](#)' provides schools advice about how to teach young children about being tricked into getting undressed online in a fun way without scaring them or explaining the motives of sex offenders.

Education settings are an important part of the inter-agency framework not only in terms of evaluating and referring concerns to Children's Services and the Police, but also in the assessment and management of risk that the child or young person may pose to themselves and others in the education setting and we ensure that we fully participate in this role.

All staff are supported to understand, that, even if there are no reports in our school, it does not mean it is not happening, it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such, it is important if staff have any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment, they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy).

Our school will respond to all signs, reports and concerns of child-on-child abuse including sexual violence and harassment, including those that have happened outside of the school or college premises, and/or online. We have clear systems in place that all staff are aware of, and will work with our local authority partners in children's social care and police where a crime may have been committed. Where a report of sexual violence has occurred, our DSL or deputy DSL will make an immediate risk and needs assessment taking into account the 5 points identified in KCSIE, paragraphs 484. The need for a risk assessment for sexual harassment will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

We ensure that all staff understand what constitutes child-on-child abuse or sexual violence and sexual harassment and that children's sexual behaviour exists on a wide continuum from normal and developmentally expected, to inappropriate, problematic, abusive and violent. Our Designated Safeguarding Leads and deputies have a good understanding of Harmful Sexual Behaviour in order to support the development of our whole school approach.

In this school, all staff understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, many of which are listed below, that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain

behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as “just banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys” can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it. Abuse may take different forms:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as ‘teenage relationship abuse’)
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse).
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence).
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party.
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery).
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm.
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

To support this agenda, the following steps are taken in school to minimise these risks. The school:

- Will provide a developmentally appropriate Relationships, Sex and Health Education curriculum which develops students understanding of acceptable behaviour and keeping themselves safe and is in line with DfE guidance from September 2021.
- Will ensure that all reports of alleged abuse or sexual harassment will be acted upon in line with Section 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 Part 5.
- Will reassure all victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault or causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent is made, the starting point is that this will be passed on to the police.
- Will have robust risk assessments in place where appropriate and in line with Section 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025, Part 5.

- Have relevant policies in place (e.g., behaviour policy, anti-bullying policy).

Victims, alleged perpetrators and any other child affected by peer-on-peer abuse and/or sexual harassment will be supported by a nominated, appropriate member of staff. KSCIE 2025 paragraph 545 includes further support, advice and information links.

# Section o. CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION (CCE) INCLUDING COUNTY LINES

(KCSIE Sept 2025 Paragraphs 34-37 and Annex B, page 150)

We will ensure that all staff are aware of the indicators that may signal that children are at risk from, or involved with CCE

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in any criminal activity and can be experienced differently by both boys and girls

- In exchange for something the victim needs or wants
- For the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator
- Through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. It can be linked to serious violence
- Specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines.

We will ensure that all staff are aware that children can become trapped by this type of exploitation and that, as they become involved, often commit crimes themselves. We will ensure that we recognise their vulnerability as victims even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
- Children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education

Please see the home office guidance:

[Preventing youth violence and gang involvement - Practical advice for schools and colleges \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/101444/preventing-youth-violence-and-gang-involvement-practical-advice-for-schools-and-colleges.pdf)

[Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/101444/preventing-youth-violence-and-gang-involvement-practical-advice-for-schools-and-colleges.pdf)

## Section P. SERIOUS VIOLENCE

Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2025 (para 46)

- We will ensure that all staff are aware of the indicators that may signal that children are at risk from, or involved with, serious violent crime.
- Indicators may include:
  - Unexplained gifts/new possessions - these can indicate children have been approached by/involved with individuals associated with criminal networks/gangs
  - Increased absence from school
  - Change in friendship/relationships with others/groups
  - Significant decline in performance
  - Signs of self-harm/significant change in wellbeing
  - Signs of assault/unexplained injuries

Staff will also be made aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage them.

Please see Home Office guidance:

[Preventing youth violence and gang involvement - Practical advice for schools and colleges \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

[Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

## Section Q. MENTAL HEALTH

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (paras 43-45)

We will ensure that all staff are aware that mental health problems could be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action will be taken following this policy's procedures

Staff will access training or information so that they are aware of how abuse, neglect and/or other traumatic childhood experiences can impact on children's mental health, behaviour and education. We will ensure that we access professional advice to support us in identifying pupils suffering from mental health problems as well as following best practice mental health guidance in schools, including the following:


[Mental health and behaviour in schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)  
[Campaign Resources | Mental Wellbeing | School Zone](#)

## **Section R. DOMESTIC ABUSE**

See Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2025 (para 41)

All of our staff are trained in understanding the detrimental impact on children of experiencing domestic abuse. We sign up to our local Operation Encompass programme to ensure we are made aware of incidents by our local partners so that we can secure the help that children need and, if required, refer in a timely way to those who have the expertise to help.

## SAFEGUARDING POLICY: APPENDIX 1

 <p><b>Strategy</b></p>	<p><b>Multi-Agency Meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Referral taken up by First contact Service: 'reasonable cause to suspect child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm'.</li> <li>•To agree whether to start s47 enquiries and to begin/complete a core assessment under Child Act 1989.</li> <li>•Professionals meeting only</li> <li>•Held at short notice (some professionals may be available by phone). Police Sergeant and investigating officer (VU); Assessment and Intervention Team manager and SW, Health, referrer (if professional) and other relevant colleagues.</li> <li>•Usually held in A&amp;I Team office, hospital.</li> <li>•To PLAN how to look into the concern: share information, consider criminal investigation, medicals, interviews etc.</li> </ul>	
 <p><b>Initial Child Protection Conference</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•<b>15 DAYS</b> after last strategy meeting</li> <li>•Accessible public building: A&amp;I offices</li> <li>•Parents/carers (supporter/legal adviser) and all relevant professionals who work with family members and children attend</li> <li>• Conference is to decide whether the child(ren) are at continuing risk of significant harm and whether CP Plan needs to be put in place.</li> <li>•<b>Tasks:</b> prepare a report for the conference on all children in family you work with</li> <li>•Share report with parents and carers at least two working days before the conference (open/transparent procedure so parents can know and question all information in advance).</li> <li>•Ensure that child's views are given</li> <li>•Produce single-agency chronology.</li> <li>•If children not put on list then consideration of services needed, now passes to relevant Child Protection Team.</li> </ul>	
 <p><b>Core Group</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•<b>10 DAYS</b> later. Date for this meeting and first Review Conference is set at the Initial Conference</li> <li>•This 'core' of essential professionals will work with the family and the young person to try and achieve change and improvement so that the child is not still at continuing risk of harm (these safety issues are dealt with before other 'welfare' matters)</li> <li>• Key worker is the social worker</li> <li>•The group complete the Child Protection Plan and complete work on the core assessment as part of this</li> <li>•The chronologies are merged and continuously updated as working documents</li> <li>•Initially meetings quite frequent but generally held about every 4-6 weeks</li> </ul>	
 <p><b>Review CP Conference</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•<b>10 WEEKS</b> (3 months) before first Review conference.</li> <li>• Evaluate effectiveness of Core Group in effecting change and better care of the children</li> <li>• '..to review the safety, health and development of the child against the planned outcomes set out in the child protection plan'</li> <li>•to see whether CP plan should continue to be in place or should be changed</li> <li>•Child's wishes and feelings must be sought and taken into account</li> <li>•if the child is not still at risk of significant harm then they should not require a CP plan</li> <li>•<b>Tasks:</b> report needed and shared with parents/carers 7 days prior to conference: evaluation what has changed, the impact on child's welfare against objectives set out in the plan</li> </ul>	



# Prevent referral flow chart County Durham

## Prevent referral flow chart for County Durham

The Channel Programme is a key part of the Prevent strategy. Section 36 of the Act requires local authorities and others to provide support for people who are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism, before they commit an offence. This process, known as [Channel](#), operates in the pre-criminal space and aims to provide support to individuals at an early stage and help safeguard them from radicalisation.

